

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF AN INDEPENDENT JUDICIARY AND A FREE PRESS**

**BY: SAMANTHA DOBRICH**

Fear is caused by the unknown, the hidden. There is a lot to fear in America as we plunge into war. Fear of biological warfare, fear of our soldiers being subjected to chemical weapons and the fear of what will happen next. Luckily we live in a country of free will and democracy. Thanks to the freedom of the press, Americans know what is happening at home and abroad and the effect it will have on them. Imagine living in Communist Russia, or under the control of Iraqi officials, never knowing what is going on in the outside world, only knowing what your leaders want you to believe. The allowance of an unbiased press means that information gets to the American people in all shapes and forms. Although some reports may be more accurate than others and the viewpoints at times obscured, it is still information, and more than what citizens in other countries are allowed to have. The fact that the press consists of ordinary citizens and is not under government control is a big part of what makes America great. You learn the good along with the bad, the right and the wrong. It is difficult to hide government corruption without American knowledge and, believe it or not, the media gives Americans a voice in the running of our government. Political decisions are heavily weighted by public opinions and the news makes sure that the people make their feelings known. The government has no censorship over the news media, allowing the truth to be available to American citizens. An independent judiciary is just as important to the democratic process as the freedom of the press. Innocent until proven guilty is one of the countless concepts that foreigners admire in the American judicial system. Our judicial system is based on the policy that twelve guilty people should go free as long as not one innocent person is sentenced. By being free of political or social pressures, judges are able to deliver fair

and impartial verdicts of innocence or guilt. Without this separation of political and social pressure, we would be no better than the dictatorships of other countries. America would not be the impressive democratic nation it is if the judicial branch of the government were based on the pressures of those in political office. America's illustrious glow to foreign nations would not be so bright if it were not for the freedoms and sovereignty that we take for granted.